

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-08 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 PM-03 SP-02 INR-05

CIAE-00 DODE-00 SAM-01 /031 W
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R 101623Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1818

INFO AMEMBASSY SANAA

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 LONDON 08784

BEIRUT PASS BAGHDAD

LIMDIS/NOFORN

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3

TAGS: PINT, PINS, PFOR, MU, YS, UK

SUBJECT: SOME THOUGHTS ON CONTAINING THE SOUTH YEMEN
(PDRY)

REF: MUSCAT 585; SANAA 1378; AND OTHERS

SUMMARY: FROM SOMEWHAT DISTANT LONDON, WE THINK THERE IS
A LOT TO BE SAID FOR TOUGH "SHIELD" APPROACH TO PDRY AD-
VOCATED BY EMBASSY SANAA, AND ALSO BY THE BRITISH. HOW-
EVER, WE PERCEIVE OTHER AREA PRESSURES WORKING AT THE MO-
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MENT FOR SOFT APPROACH AIMED AT PEACEFULLY REINTEGRATING

PDRY INTO ARAB FAMILY THROUGH VARIETY OF "CARROTS." WE SEE LITTLE CHANCE OF DISSUADING ARAB GOVERNMENTS FROM MAKING THIS APPROACH (THOUGH MOST WILL NOT ABANDON ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS). IT WOULD BE ADVANTAGEOUS TO US IF APPROACH WERE SUCCESSFUL. IF--AS SEEMS MORE PROBABLE-- APPROACH PROVES UNSUCCESSFUL, IT WILL BE EASIER FOR SAUDIS, EGYPTIANS, AND OTHERS TO REVERSE GEARS IF THEY DO NOT HAVE TO FACE AN "I TOLD YOU SO" ATTITUDE ON OUR PART. WE MIGHT THEN FIND THE SAUDIS (AND PERHAPS KUWAITIS, ABU DHABIANS, ETC.) MORE WILLING THAN AT PRESENT TO UNDERTAKE (LARGELY OPEN-ENDED) COMMITMENT TO BUILDING MILITARY AND ECONOMIC SHIELD IN YEMEN ARAB REPUBLIC AND SULTANATE OF OMAN BEHIND WHICH THEY CAN FEEL SAFER--AND THROUGH WHICH USG CAN GAIN SOME REINSURANCE. IN ANY CASE, WE APPEAR TO HAVE LITTLE CHOICE BUT TO WAIT AND SEE. END SUMMARY.

1. FOLLOWING COMMENTS ARE OFFERED BY US IN LONDON IN RESPONSE TO MUSCAT'S SPECIFIC INVITATION (FIRST REFTEL) AND WITH FULL DEFERENCE TO AREA POSTS SO MUCH CLOSER TO THE SCENE. THEY ARE OFFERED LESS TO ILLUSTRATE CURRENT BRITISH APPROACH TO PROBLEM OF PDRY--WHICH IS PRETTY WELL KNOWN TO ADDRESSEES--THAN TO CONTRIBUTE TO DISCUSSION OF USG POLICY TOWARD THIS ISSUE WHICH HAS BEEN STIMULATED BY MUSCAT'S ORIGINAL INVITATION.

2. AS ADDRESSEES ARE AWARE FROM PREVIOUS REPORTING, BRITISH ATTITUDE TOWARD PDRY IS HARD-NOSED, PARALLELING THAT EXPRESSED BY SANAA IN ITS REFTEL. BRITISH REGARD PDRY REGIME AS TOUGH, DISCIPLINED, AND COHESIVE. DESPITE RECURRENCE OF RIVALRY BETWEEN PRESIDENT ALI AND PARTY CHIEF ISMAIL, BRITISH ARE CONVINCED THAT BOTH MEN KNOW THEY STILL NEED EACH OTHER AND WILL NOT (OR PERHAPS CANNOT) GO FOR KNOCKOUT BLOW. THUS BRITISH WARN AGAINST POLLYANNISH TALK OF WINNING OVER PDRY LEADERS THROUGH LAVISH KINDNESS AND RECOMMEND TO ALL AREA GOVERNMENTS (INCLUDING THE KUWAITI) THAT ANY CARROTS GIVEN PDRY BE ON BASIS OF QUID PRO QUO WITH SPECIFIC PERFORMANCE OF MODERATE ACTS EXACTED FROM PDRY'S MARXIST LEADERS.

3. BY SAME TOKEN, HOWEVER, IT SEEMS TO US BRITISH ARE
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CHOOSING TO OVERLOOK AREA PRESSURES WHICH CONSPIRE IN FAVOR OF ARAB EFFORTS TO WIN OVER PDRY REGIME THROUGH BLANDISHMENTS, AT LEAST IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE. FOR EXAMPLE, EGYPTIANS ARE INTERESTED IN ESTABLISHING SOME VISIBLE POSITION IN STRAITS OF BAB EL MANDEB AS AT LEAST A BARGAINING COUNTER VIS-A-VIS ISRAEL (AS WELL AS IMPROVING THEIR POSITION FOLLOWING REOPENING OF SUEZ CANAL). THIS HAS RESULTED IN THE REPORTED LEASE AGREEMENT FOR PERIM

ISLAND, USING SAUDI FUNDS.

4. MOREOVER, PAN-ARAB ARGUMENTS FOR SWEETNESS, LIGHT AND
UNITY (OVER-SENTIMENTALIZED AS THESE MAY BE AT TIMES)
PROBABLY HAVE HAD THEIR EFFECT ON CURRENT CONTENDERS FOR
ARAB LEADERSHIP SUCH AS SAUDI ARABIA (ESPECIALLY IN VIEW
OF ALGERIAN COMPETITION). ADMITTEDLY HARD EVIDENCE IS

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INFO AMEMBASSY SANAA

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AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

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AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

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LACKING, BUT ONE MIGHT ALSO WONDER WHETHER CANNY SAUDIS
HAVE NOT MADE CALCULATION THAT IT IS WORTHWHILE AT LEAST
TO TRY A POLICY OF BRIBERY WITH PDRY FOR AWHILE--WITHOUT
GIVING UP OPTION OF CONTINUING AID TO OMAN AND YEMEN ARAB

REPUBLIC. IF THIS PRODUCES RESULTS IT MIGHT TURN OUT TO BE CHEAPER FOR SAUDIS IN THE LONG RUN THAN WOULD HEAVIER COMMITMENT TO FINANCE MILITARY AND ECONOMIC BUILDUP OF YEMEN ARAB REPUBLIC AS WELL AS OMAN, A COMMITMENT WHICH SAUDIS PROBABLY VIEW AS OPEN-ENDED AND LIKELY TO GROW (EVEN IN THE CASE OF OMAN, WHOSE LIMITED OIL RESERVES ARE EXPECTED TO RUN OUT). SUCCESSFUL BRIBERY OF PDRY (ESPECIALLY AS OTHER ARAB STATES ARE AT PRESENT APPLAUDING SAUDIS FOR TRYING IT) WOULD CARRY ADDITIONAL POLITICO-SECRET

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CURITY ADVANTAGE OF PRESERVING A BALANCE NOT OF POWER BUT OF RELATIVE WEAKNESS AMONG SAUDI ARABIA'S NEIGHBORS. THIS MIGHT BE VIEWED IN RIYADH AS PREFERABLE (IF IT IS ACHIEVABLE) TO THE "SHIELD" POLICY RECOMMENDED BY EMBASSY SANAA WHICH COULD LEAD TO A SITUATION SOME FIVE OR TEN YEARS FROM NOW WHEN SAUDI ARABIA MIGHT HAVE TO FACE UP TO AN "ALLY" SUCH AS THE (MORE HEAVILY POPULATED) YEMEN ARAB REPUBLIC WITH GREAT MILITARY POWER, RISING ECONOMIC AMBITIONS, AND A POSSIBLE ABSENCE OF GRATITUDE TOWARD ITS LARGE, RICH, UNDER-POPULATED SAUDI BENEFACTOR. OF COURSE SAUDIS HAVE TO RECKON WITH USG ATTITUDES ON SUCH QUESTIONS AND CAN BE EXPECTED TO BE WARY OF TIPPING THEIR HAND TO US TOO SOON.

5. AREA POSTS HAVE COMMENTED ON OTHER RELEVANT FACTORS SUCH AS KUWAITI SELF-INTEREST IN TRYING TO BUY IMMUNITY FROM RADICAL SUBVERSION INSOFAR AS THIS IS INFLUENCED AND SUPPORTED BY PDRY. WHILE USG OFFICIALS MIGHT JUSTIFIABLY ASCRIBE IRAQI VOLTE-FACE MORE TO PRESSURES OF KURDISH WAR AND GENERAL ISOLATION FROM ARAB WORLD THAN TO ANY SPECIFIC CARROTS DANGLED BEFORE NOSES OF IRAQI AUTHORITIES, IT REMAINS A FACT THAT ARGUMENTS OF ARAB "BROTHERHOOD" PROBABLY CLOUD THE VISION OF MANY AREA LEADERS AND CAUSE THEM TO VIEW IRAQI CASE AS EXAMPLE OF EFFICACY OF ARAB RECONCILIATION POLICIES APPLICABLE ALSO TO PDRY. IN ANY CASE, INITIAL RELIEF MANY AREA GOVERNMENTS FELT WITH ABRUPT CESSATION OF IRAQI-IRANIAN TENSION IS PROBABLY ALREADY TEMPERED BY REALIZATION THAT EVEN THE SEMBLANCE OF A "CO-OPERATIVE" POLICY IN THE GULF BETWEEN THE POWERFUL MILITARY FORCES OF IRAN AND THE IDEOLOGICALLY RADICAL SUBVERSIVE AGENTS OF IRAQ DOES NOT CALL FOR COMPLACENCY ON THE PART OF THE WEAKER STATES IN THE AREA. IN FACT THIS DEVELOPMENT INCREASES IMPORTANCE OF UNITY AMONG THE OTHERS, AT LEAST TO THE EXTENT OF MINIMIZING OPEN QUARRELS OR RIVALRIES WHICH MIGHT ATTRACT DIRECT OR INDIRECT INTERVENTION BY IRAN OR IRAQ. BRINGING PDRY PEACEFULLY BACK INTO THE FOLD BECOMES EVEN MORE ATTRACTIVE UNDER SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES. SO DOES SUPPORT FOR SAUDI ARABIA (AND RELATIVELY DISTANT EGYPT) AS LEADERS OF SUCH RECONCILIATION EF-

FORTS-AS OPPOSED TO SUPPORT OF MORE MILITANT POLICY AN-
CHORED IN MILITARY STRENGTH WHICH COULD PROVIDE OPPORTUN-
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ITIES FOR IRANIAN MUSCLE-FLEXING.

6. OUR ANALYSIS THEREFORE LEADS US TO THE THREE-PART CON-
CLUSION THAT (A) IT MIGHT WELL BE PREFERABLE--IF USG HAD
ITS "DRUTHERS"--TO CONCENTRATE ON "SHIELD" POLICY TOWARD
PDRY, AS SO RESOURCEFULLY ARGUED BY EMBASSY SANAA AND FOL-
LOWED IN PRACTICE BY THE BRITISH. HOWEVER, (B) THERE ARE
INDICATIONS THAT SOME OF OUR BEST OLD AND NEW AREA FRIENDS
(SAUDI ARABIA AND EGYPT) HAVE COGENT REASONS TO OPT FOR

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INFO AMEMBASSY SANAA

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

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TRYING "CARROT" APPROACH TO PDRY (WITHOUT GIVING UP OTHER OPTIONS) AT LEAST IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE. THIS APPROACH IS SUPPORTED BY COMBINATION OF ARAB SENTIMENTALISM AND COLD-EYED PERCEPTION OF THEIR OWN INTERESTS ON PART OF SMALLER GULF STATES. INDICATIONS ARE THESE STATES ARE ACTING ALONG SUCH "CARROT" LINES WITHOUT CONSULTING US (OR THE BRITISH). GIVEN UNLIKELIHOOD THAT WE COULD EFFECTIVELY DISSUADE THEM FROM SUCH AN APPROACH, WE MIGHT (C) CONSIDER WHETHER THESE COUNTRIES DO NOT AFTER ALL HAVE A POINT. CERTAINLY A PEACEFUL REINTEGRATION OF PDRY INTO THE AREA WOULD SEEM PREFERABLE TO MAINTENANCE OF LARGE ARMED FORCES IN THE YEMEN ARAB REPUBLIC AND OMAN FOR THE INDEFINITE FUTURE--ESPECIALLY IF PDRY REINTEGRATION IS

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ACCOMPLISHED UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF ARAB FRIENDS SUCH AS THE SAUDIS AND EGYPTIANS, THUS MINIMIZING THE RISK THAT PDRY REINTEGRATION COULD REINFORCE LATENT ANTI-WESTERN RADICALISM IN THE YAR, OMAN, AND THE GULF STATES.

7. SHOULD THIS EFFORT TO REINTEGRATE PDRY FAIL--AS SEEMS MORE LIKELY, ON BALANCE, THAN NOT--ABSENCE OF USG "I TOLD YOU SO" ATTITUDE SHOULD FACILITATE REVERSAL OF GEARS IN SAUDI/EGYPTIAN POLICY. WE WILL THEN PROBABLY STAND BETTER CHANCE OF STIMULATING EVER-INCREASING CONTRIBUTIONS OF SAUDI FINANCIAL LARGESSE COMMITTED TO THE MILITARY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE YAR AND OMAN, A DEVELOPMENT WHICH IN THE LONG RUN OFFERS SOME REINSURANCE FOR THE SECURITY OF WESTERN INTERESTS IN THE ARABIAN PENINSULA. IN ANY CASE, WE APPEAR TO HAVE LITTLE CHOICE BUT TO WAIT AND SEE.

RICHARDSON

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